

# FLIGHT JACKET

Vol. 7, No. 28

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

July 22, 2005

## Miramar Marines take to skies over Europe

Story by Sgt. Adrienne Rigez

Marine Forces Europe

POZNAN, Poland — More than 200 U.S. Marines recently deployed to Poznan, Poland, to participate in Exercise Clean Hunter, a NATO air exercise.

The annual exercise was designed to improve interoperability between allied nations by conducting offensive and defensive maneuvers in support of large-scale air operations. The exercise included 12 countries from northern Europe with the Marine portion of the exercise beginning June 29 and lasting two weeks at the Polish 31st Air Base in Poznan.

Reserve Marines from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 134 from MCAS Miramar, Calif., Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 452 from Newburg, N.Y., and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 41 from Ft. Worth, Texas, came together for the exercise.

During the exercise, the Marine pilots mostly flew over Polish and German airspace, alternating attacks on established zones. The pilots had to constantly adjust their missions, moving from a defensive to an offensive role.

“We led four SU-22s into Germany and were opposed by F/A-16s and F-4s. We did really well. (When we) came back across (the border), the MiG-29s were waiting to engage,” said Lt. Col. Tom Arnett, commanding officer, VMFA-134, Marine Aircraft Group 46, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing. “And there were no good guy losses at all!”

This international role-playing was an opportunity for the Marines to test their skills and also fly alongside aircraft most of them only envisioned as potential enemies during the Cold War.

“When the MiG-29s showed up, our tactics went as planned, and it was a validation of everything we’ve been doing for years. It was outstanding,” said Arnett.

During the exercise, the Marines worked around the clock to ensure the aircraft were being maintained for upcoming flights. Maintenance crews had the opportunity to expand on procedures they were familiar with, as well as see the results of their work.

But when they were not on duty, the Marines were granted time off to experience the city of Poznan, one of Poland’s largest commercial and industrial centers, and mingle with the Polish natives.

“Interacting with the Polish Air Force and being in a foreign



Corporal Mike Myers of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 134, Marine Aircraft Group 46, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, a reserve unit based at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., waits for a signal from pilot Maj. John Moore before takeoff during Exercise Clean Hunter 2005. The NATO exercise brought together 12 nations to train in offensive and defensive air maneuvers in support of large-scale operations. Photo by Sgt. Adrienne Rigez

country, you get a good feel of what it’s like to be away,” said Lance Cpl. Trac Pham, an aviation ordnance technician with VMFA-134.

“In a training environment, it’s a little more realistic than drilling twice a month.”

During a break from the exercise, the Marines took time to celebrate Independence Day with their Polish counterparts. They

forewent hotdogs and burgers for traditional Polish cuisine – pates, soups and kabobs.

“This is the best trip I have ever had in my life,” said Arnett. “The training was good, and the integration with the Polish military has been good. I am probably going to come back here on vacation.”

## Firefighter Olympics heat up at Station 61

Story by Cpl. T.D. Smith

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif.— The California Firefighter’s Summer Olympics continued its weeklong competition at Miramar’s fire station and Semper Fit Sports Complex with a six-part challenge July 11.

The physical fitness event encompassed a

three-mile run, a bench press, timed sit-ups, a 100-meter dash, a 100-meter swim and a modified combat challenge obstacle course.

The three-mile run took place at the air station’s physical fitness test course. Other events like the bench press, in which the competitors attempted to record the most repetitions of lifting 80 percent of their weight, unfolded at the Semper Fit complex. Miramar’s water survival training pool served

as the location for the swim, while Station 61 hosted the obstacle challenge.

Participants in the physical fitness challenge competed in one of four categories: males ages 18-29, 30-39, 40 and over, and female. Medals were awarded to the top three competitors in each division that had more than five participants.

Other events in the competition included basketball, a triathlon and Texas Hold ‘em

Poker tournament, which was new to this year’s competition.

Among the competitors were firefighters from various stations in California including Los Angeles County, Santa Cruz and Fullerton. This inter-station rivalry is in keeping with its tradition, to afford California’s

See OLYMPICS, page 4

## Inside

Weekend forecast from Miramar’s weather station



86°/66°  
Today



83°/65°  
Saturday



81°/65°  
Sunday

Aviation  
legend  
remembered  
Page 6



GSE techs  
impact wing’s  
mission  
Page 7





# Suicide prevention program underway for servicemembers

Story by Lance Cpl. Joel Abshier

2nd Force Service Support Group

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — Suicide, particularly among first-term Marines and Sailors, is a military dilemma with increasing dimensions and growing concern.

Suicide is the leading cause of death in the Marine Corps, which statistically has a higher rate than all other U.S. military branches.

The Marine Corps has a suicide prevention program, which implements and provides guidelines for servicemembers who are either considering suicide, or for Marines and Sailors who detect a sense of suicidal tendencies in someone they know.

In many cases of suicidal ideology, warning signs can be abundant in a person's behavior, according to Navy Capt. Vince Arnold, 2nd FSSG chaplain.

These signs can include, but are not limited to, death or terminal illness of relative or friend; loss of job, home, money, status, self-esteem, personal security; divorce, separation, broken relationship, stress on family; alcohol or drug abuse and depression.

"If a Marine or Sailor is giving off any of these signs, it is best not to leave them alone," Arnold said. "Options to prevent anything tragic, would be to contact a chaplain or the (servicemembers) chain of command."

There are many methods of prevention, which include going to a chaplain, talking with a Navy doctor or going to a suicide prevention center, all of which are confidential, according to Lt. Cmdr. Bryan D. Mack, 2nd FSSG French Creek Clinic commanding officer.

"The first step to recovery is talking to someone," Mack said. "If you keep something as serious as suicidal ideas bottled up, it can become overwhelming."

If a servicemember is showing signs and refuses to talk to anyone, it then becomes the responsibility of a fellow Marine or Sailor to help them by informing someone in their chain of command, according to Petty Officer 1st Class Edward B. Lennon, hospitalman with 2nd FSSG French Creek Clinic.

Persistence and patience may be needed to seek, engage and continue with as many options as possible. In any referral situation, let the person know you care and want to maintain contact, explained Arnold.

"Suicide is a serious matter," Arnold said. "If you know someone who feels hopeless and has no sense of meaning, inform them that they do. The best thing you can do for them is listen."

For more information on the suicide prevention program, contact the Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-479-3339



## Is this your Eclipse?

The above vehicle has been marked for impound by the Provost Marshal's Office. To avoid having the vehicle towed, please store it in the Marine Corps Community Services or Traffic Management Office lots.

Abandoned vehicles at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar present security risks as well as environmental and safety concerns. PMO attempts to identify and contact vehicle owners of illegally parked, abandoned vehicles prior to tagging the vehicle with a Department of Defense notice. Vehicles are then scheduled for towing three days following the notice.

For more information, please call 577-1276 or 577-4150.

# Armed Forces Vacation Club offers overnight getaways

Headquarters Marine Corps Press Release

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va. — The Armed Forces Vacation Club now offers the option of "nightly getaways."

AFVC is a space available program that offers Department of Defense affiliated personnel the opportunity to take affordable condominium vacations at resorts around the world using condominium timeshares that the owners do not use.

The program is managed by Resort Condominiums International, LLC, a leader in the vacation rental industry.

Under the program, participants have the option to rent a vacation condo either in increments of one night or more, or stay for seven days. Duration is subject to availability. Resort properties are available in the United States and Canada, with "Nightly Getaway" rates starting as low as \$75 during peak season, "Last Call" weekly rentals in peak season starting as low as \$199, and "Space Available" weekly rentals starting at \$264.

Nightly getaway reservations must be made within 60 days of travel. Weekly rentals can be made up to 12 months in advance.

Rentals come in a variety of sizes: one bedroom

and larger condos, studios and cottages. Many of the vacation properties come with fully equipped kitchens, washer and dryer, living room, dining area, swimming pool, hot tub, fitness center and handicapped accessibility features.

"This is part of a continuing effort to enhance our vacation club in providing military personnel with more flexibility in choosing when and where they stay," said Verlin Abbott, AFVC program director. "With more vacation options available, we expect an increase in customer satisfaction since this program will better suit many military members who may only have short periods of time available."

To make any AFVC reservation, members will need their AFVC installation identification number obtainable from your base Marine Corps Community Services Information, Tickets, and Tours Office. For nightly getaway reservations, call 1-888-338-0970.

For weekly reservations, call 1-800-724-9988 or go to [www.afvclub.com](http://www.afvclub.com).

See your local MCCA ITT office for more details.

## MIRAMARKS

"How can you intervene if you suspect someone may be contemplating suicide?"

CPL. LARRY L. JACKSON

Expediter  
VMFA(AW)-242

"I would do everything I could to point the Marine in the right direction and get a senior Marine involved if I can't help."



LANCE CPL. JAROD R. KLUEMPER

Radar final controller  
H&HS

"I would talk to the Marine and find out if he is going to be ok. If not, I would find my NCO or someone else to help."



## FLIGHT JACKET

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# ATC Marines keep skies safe over Miramar

Story by Cpl. T.D. Smith

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Like an all-seeing eye, the Marines posted in MCAS Miramar's 115-foot Air Traffic Control tower are responsible for tracking the movements and controlling the actions of all aircraft that pass into Miramar's air space.

The ATC Marines control all the air space within a five-mile radius. The fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft that ATC Marines take charge of within this area are not just the assets of the 17 squadrons belonging to the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, but all aircraft needing to pass over or land at Miramar. Those aircraft include American and foreign military aircraft and sometimes civilian planes and helicopters.

The training ATC Marines receive is different depending on the type of airfield to which they are assigned. At Miramar, both fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft are capable of landing, so Marines must be prepared to facilitate both.

There are various positions within the tower ATC Marines must master. In order to become proficient in all these areas, constant training and testing is required.

One area is the flight data position, which assists local controllers and authorizes aircraft to enter and land within Miramar's airspace.

"Safety is the number one priority at all times. ATC Marines are responsible for the control of aircraft and they must instruct people on what to do with regards to safety," said Lance Cpl. Christopher Reep, ATC air traffic control specialist, MCAS Miramar.

Air Traffic Control is on top of safety even before the planes launch. The ground control position within the tower is in constant contact with pilots while they are on the runway preparing for takeoff.

In addition to pre-launch procedures, the ground controller is also responsible for ensuring the safety of aircraft and crew upon landing. This Marine contacts emergency response vehicles or other



Air traffic controllers are posted inside Miramar's ATC tower ensuring safe aviation operations. They are ready day or night to launch and land fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. *Photo by Cpl. Tara D. Smith*

needed personnel if there is a problem during a landing.

The radar room, also under the cognizance of ATC, is crucial to successful launching and landing of aircraft. Pilots receive vital information, such as weather conditions and glide path, from the radar controllers and are guided in by these Marines and their equipment.

"The information provided by ATC is

key in de-confliction, especially around congested air space. They provide pilots with the current weather conditions and make sure they have the correct altimeter setting which is necessary for landing," said 1st Lt. Jason Ladd, pilot, Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd MAW.

With Marines deploying, changing stations and transitioning out of the Corps,

maintaining consistency in training is a constant challenge.

To combat this problem, Miramar employs civilian air traffic controllers to ensure the best training is maintained regardless of where Marines go after their time in the tower.

Whether civilian or Marine, Miramar's air traffic controllers keep the skies over Miramar safe.

## Get Noticed by Motorists...



## NOT BY PMO

MARINE CORPS ORDER 5100.19E STATES:

"During periods of reduced visibility, and before morning colors and after evening colors, personnel shall wear retro-reflective clothing, vest or belt when conducting physical training or exercising on or near roadways."

It's not just a good idea  
IT'S THE LAW



# Program brings servicemember's children bedtime stories

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif.—Many studies have corroborated the theory that reading aloud to children can greatly facilitate their development and help set the foundations for future academic success.

Through the efforts of a local non-profit program, deployed servicemembers can now read to their children even while a half-a-world away.

“This program is a great way for deployed servicemembers to strengthen the bonds between them and their children, providing a bridge through communication during challenging times,” said Teri Patterson, director of development and public relations, San Diego Armed Services YMCA. “With the help of the Family Literacy Foundation, the United Through Reading program helps to ease the anxiety of separation for a parent in the military who is getting ready to deploy and his or her children, while bolstering morale for their entire family.”

The San Diego YMCA program now offers pre-deployment videotaping sessions at their Murphy Canyon location. Marines, Sailors and other deploying military personnel from all branches of service can now take advantage of a free recording session prior to their deployment to record a book reading for their children.

“This program is a great gift that will help children feel closer to an absent parent during deployment,” said Patterson. “Our partnership with (FLF) is a close relationship designed to help deployed servicemembers. If anyone preparing to go overseas has a special child, including younger siblings, nieces, nephews, grandchildren or an adopted classroom they would like to record a reading session for, we can certainly accommodate them.”

Since 1920, the San Diego YMCA has been providing services without government subsidization to those who serve our country in uniform, according to Patterson.

“We have more than 30 free programs and services to junior enlisted military (members) and their families from three locations,” added Patterson. “Our staff is fo-



**Navy Lt. Allison Johnson, air operations officer, USNS Mercy, reads a children's story during a United Through Reading taping session for deployed servicemembers in June at the San Diego Armed Services YMCA. Johnson's husband is a Marine pilot stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. Photo courtesy of San Diego ASYMCA**

cused on helping the military community with programs like (United Through Reading) as well as counseling, recreation activities and active duty events to help those who help keep our country free when they need it most.”

Since the program started June 28, several servicemembers have jumped on board to record a session, including a dual military couple.

“We recently had an active duty participant who is

married to a Marine officer at Miramar record a session for their child,” said Deborah Loeffler, program director, FLF. “She made a tape for their 20-month-old son and we recently received a photo of him watching the tape, and you can see his reaction. It's a perfect example of the full-circle idea.”

For more information on United Through Reading or other San Diego YMCA programs, visit [www.asymcasd.org](http://www.asymcasd.org) or call (858) 751-5755.

## OLYIMPICS, continued from page 1

firefighters an opportunity to come together in friendly competition that encourages physical fitness while providing an informal forum for exchanging ideas.

That the air station played host to the event highlighted the fact Miramar has not only military firefighters, but civilians as well. “It helps us get known,” said Doug Bouck, engineer, Miramar Fire Department. “Most don't think civilian firefighters are on a military station. They think it is all military personnel, but now they know we are here and we can help each other out a little more.”

Miramar's support was critical to the event's success as it aided the event's organizers, the Chula Vista Fire Department, in defraying the cost of the event. “We would have had to pay in order to use all the different facilities this event needs,” said Jeremy Czapinski, firefighter, Chula Vista Fire Department, “so it was a big help for the Marine Corps to donate its facilities and personnel.”



# Fallen Marines Honored

Story by Division of Public Affairs

Headquarters Marine Corps

GALVESTON, Texas — The Marine Corps League Detachment No. 668 in Galveston, Texas, has begun a “Fallen Marine Program.”

The program was implemented Jan. 1, 2002 and is fully operational and successful in helping every Marine Corps League detachment to honor their fallen comrades.

The program is different, by design, from most funeral services. It is flexible and written to be amenable to any detachment regardless of monetary or manpower resources.

The service can be performed regardless of what other services are planned. It is intended primarily for presentation during the visitation hours and not at the graveside. However, the service can be performed at any time or place agreeable to the detachment and the Marine’s family.

Uniform procedures unique to the Marine Corps League which can be used throughout the country are now available. Recognizing a fallen Marine with this program can be as simple as mailing a card to giving full Marine Corps League honors.

Full honors are as easy as putting on a suit, a Marine Corps or Marine Corps League uniform and driving to the visitation site. It takes less than 5 minutes to perform this service at the funeral home.

The complete “Marine Corps League Honor Service,” including a flag presentation, can be viewed and downloaded at [www.mclgalveston.com](http://www.mclgalveston.com).

According to Detachment Commandant Joe Vickery, some state organizations have approved this honor service, and between 50 and 100 local detachments have used it. The number of fallen Marines honored is not known at this time, but the Galveston County Detachment has performed 154 Marine Corps League Honor Services.

“We are hoping,” said Vickery, “that the national organization will adopt this ‘Fallen Marine Program’ at their next meeting and recommend it to all state departments and local detachments so we may have uniform procedures to honor our fallen comrades and a central place for accountability.”



## MAG-11 transfers command

Colonel Earl S. Wederbrook, outgoing commanding officer, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, receives the Legion of Merit Medal from Major General Keith J. Stalder, commanding general, 3rd MAW, during a change of command ceremony July 14 at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. Wederbrook, whose next assignment is chief of staff, 3rd MAW, relinquished command of MAG-11 to Col. James L. Stalnaker. Photo by Lance Cpl. William I. Dubose III

### SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES!



MCAS Miramar needs servicemembers from all ranks, occupations, experiences, backgrounds and upbringings to participate in the Guest Speaker Program. If you are interested, call the Community Relations Department at (858) 577-4333.

*An appreciative audience awaits*

# A pioneering spirit of Marine aviation

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

*Editor's Note: First in a three-part series on leaders of Marine Corps aviation.*

Struggling to defend his Roseburg, Ore., home from an intruder during an attempted robbery June 29, 1998, the Marine Corps' first combat fighter ace was killed after suffering a shotgun blast to the head. His wife was also wounded during the violent altercation, according to contemporary news accounts.

It proved a tragic fate for a legendary hero of Marine aviation.

Even as his loss was felt around the Corps, his life's accomplishments were celebrated.

In tribute to his exploits as a fighter pilot, retired Maj. Gen. Marion Eugene Carl was known as the 'Chuck Yeager of the Marine Corps', in honor of both his own spirit and that of the now infamous Air Force ace and test pilot.

His life began November 1, 1915, in Hubbard, Ore. Growing up in his native state, he went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering with a minor in aeronautical engineering from Oregon State University in 1938.

During his 34-year career as a Naval aviator that began with a commission Dec. 1, 1939, Carl became the Corps' first qualified helicopter pilot, the second American pilot to land a jet on a ship, a world record holder for both the fastest speed and highest altitude achieved in jet-powered flight, and logged more than 13,000 flight hours before his retirement in 1973.

As a Marine and a fighter pilot, he was highly respected by his peers and was considered to be "one of the three finest Naval aviators of the World War II generation,"

according to retired Navy Rear Adm. James D. Ramage, another leader in Naval aviation in World War II.

Carl's air combat record is exemplary. He was awarded the Navy Cross for actions during the defense of Midway Island in June 1942. Later, flying almost daily combat with Marine Fighter Squadron 223 and the "Cactus Air Force" from Henderson Field at Guadalcanal, he earned a second Navy Cross, a Distinguished Flying Cross and five Air Medals. He emerged battle-tested with 18-and-a-half Japanese kills from the cockpit of his F4F-4 Wildcat and then an F4U Corsair.

After the war ended in 1945, he entered the Navy's test pilot school and graduated first in his class. It was later during his command of the Corps' first jet squadron that he set a world speed record of 650 miles-per-hour in 1947. Only two months later, Air Force Capt. Chuck Yeager broke the record in the Bell X-1.

But Carl continued to make his mark by leading the way.

In August 1953, Carl, then a lieutenant colonel, set two more records in a jet soaring to 83,225 feet and a speed of 1,143 miles-per-hour later in September 1953.

Always at home in the cockpit, in the 1960's he joined the Division of Aviation at Headquarters Marine Corps before flying a variety of aircraft, including UH-1s, A-4s, F-4s and F-8s, as a brigade commander and assistant wing commander during combat missions in Vietnam.

Near the end of his career, he was promoted to major general in 1967 and served as commanding officer for 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., before finishing his career as Inspector General of the Marine Corps.

The Naval Institute Press published Carl's autobiography, "Pushing the Envelope," in 1994. The book not only reveals his honor, courage and commitment, but sheds light on his leadership style and modest character.

As a leader, Carl knew how to take care of his Marines. He

believed, "you take care of your people and they will take care of you," according to his autobiography.

His achievements as fighter pilot and a Marine, as retold in historical accounts, will always outshine and eclipse the unexpected and lamentable manner of his death.

Many military heroes and fellow Marines, including close friend and former Marine fighter pilot Sen. John Glenn, attended his funeral. Carl was laid to rest in Section 66 at Arlington National Cemetery July 9, 1998, but his inspirational legacy endures each time a Marine pilot straps into an aircraft, even to this day.



**The Marine Corps' first fighter ace, then Maj. Marion E. Carl, seen here at Vella Lavella in the Solomon Islands, Jan. 5, 1944, achieved 18-and-a-half confirmed kills during World War II. (Official USMC photo)**



# GSE technicians ensure take-off from sidelines

Story by Staff Sgt. Maria C. Brookman

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Not all maintenance technicians aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar play a direct role in supporting aircraft flight capabilities, but the Ground Support Equipment technicians of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 are well aware of their equipments' impact on fighter jet flight operations.

"The gear itself is very important to get an aircraft (ready for issue)," said Cpl. Danny Mixon, GSE paint and corrosion control work center supervisor, MALS-11, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, and 21-year-old native of Idabel, Okla. "How else could you test the hydraulics system of an aircraft without one of our hydraulic test stands?"

The stand is used to test and purify the hydraulics systems of jets and is one example of dozens of pieces of equipment that are used to not only keep the jets safely airborne but also ready for combat missions.

All munitions loaded onto aircraft are done so with the use of GSE's weapons loaders and hoists. "We directly impact the wing's mission," said Cpl. Joseph N. Wagner, a supervisor in the GSE hydraulics and pneumatic systems shop, and 21-year-old native of Chicago. "(Marines) on the flightline can't do maintenance on aircraft or get them up in the air without GSE. If we were not here to support them, they don't go anywhere."

Both Marines share similar views on what impact their efforts have on flight operations, but they differ in one factor that usually determines a technician's area of expertise:



**Sergeant Brett A. Jones surveys an aviation ground support equipment weapons loader on Marine Corps Air Station Miramar June 16. Jones, a 22-year-old from Parkersburg, W.V., is a quality assurance collateral duty inspector with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. Photo by Staff Sgt. Maria C. Brookman**

Military Occupational Specialty.

Mixon is a support equipment electrician and refrigeration technician, and Wagner is a hydraulics and pneumatic systems mechanic. Even so, both Marines are expected to perform in each other's MOS.

Sergeant George R. Singer, GSE tire and battery shop work center supervisor, has both an electrician and a mechanic working for him and says it's not a problem for the different MOSs to work side by side. "It helps," said

the 26-year-old native of Rochester Hills, Mich. "(We) bring each other's skills in."

Cpl. Adam A. Criswell, GSE production controller, also credits the ability of all the "dual-hatted" technicians in the shop to successfully maintain so many different types of equipment. "(We) mix and cross train everybody," said the 22-year-old native of Springer, N.M. Criswell notes this mutually supportive training enables each technician to know what to do if they are deployed with a

minimal staff.

For Lance Cpl. Leonardo A. Contreras, a 20-year-old native of Bakersfield, Calif., cross training in an area outside his specialty means he is learning to become qualified in more areas of GSE.

"I didn't expect it," Contreras said, on cross training in a different MOS.

"But it just means I can work on any piece of gear."



The reflection of an M2 .50 caliber machine gun can be seen on the visor of Lance Cpl. Brandon P. Pratt while he looks out the gunner’s window of a CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter on his way to Idesuna Island in Okinawa, Japan, to conduct aerial gunnery training June 28. Pilots and crew chiefs with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262 (Reinforced), currently attached to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, had an opportunity to train for real world scenarios by conducting aircraft division leader and aerial gunnery training. Pratt is a CH-46E crew chief with HMM-262. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Scott M. Biscuiti*

# ‘Flying Tigers’ crew chiefs train to engage enemy

Story by Lance Cpl. Scott M. Biscuiti

*MCB Camp Butler Combat Correspondent*

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION FUTENMA, OKINAWA, Japan — The training scenario: A squad-sized element of enemy troops, armed with anti-aircraft missiles inhabit an island off the coast of Okinawa. Helicopter pilots must attempt to keep their “Phrogs” concealed during the flight to the hostile island, engage targets of opportunity and insert troops to take out the enemy. The crew chiefs will engage multiple targets on the island using M2 .50 caliber machine guns.

The “Flying Tigers” of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262 (Reinforced), currently attached to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, stormed the island during a training exercise that took place June 28. Pilots and crew chiefs worked hand-in-hand during the training. The training counted as aircraft division leader training aimed at developing pilots’ leadership in the air, and aerial gunnery intended

to improve the crew chiefs marksmanship.

All flight operations require a strong sense of teamwork. When it comes to overall readiness of a helicopter squadron, the pilots control where the helicopter flies, and the crew chiefs work long hours, making sure the helicopters are ready for the mission.

“In Iraq, I saw firsthand how important crew chiefs are to overall mission success,” said 1st Lt. Alex T. Kushnir, flight equipment officer, HMM-262 (REIN). “A crew chief is a jack-of-all-trades. They are the guys who get the helos ready for us.”

Before a helicopter can fly, crew chiefs inspect the helicopter, prepare the cabin in accordance with mission requirements, fuel it, and acquire all needed equipment, said Cpl. Leif D. Skredsvig, a CH-46E crew chief with HMM-262 (REIN).

“We’re responsible for the mechanics of the aircraft, as well as operating all crew-served weapons,” Skredsvig said. “We make sure the weapons are in working order and set up

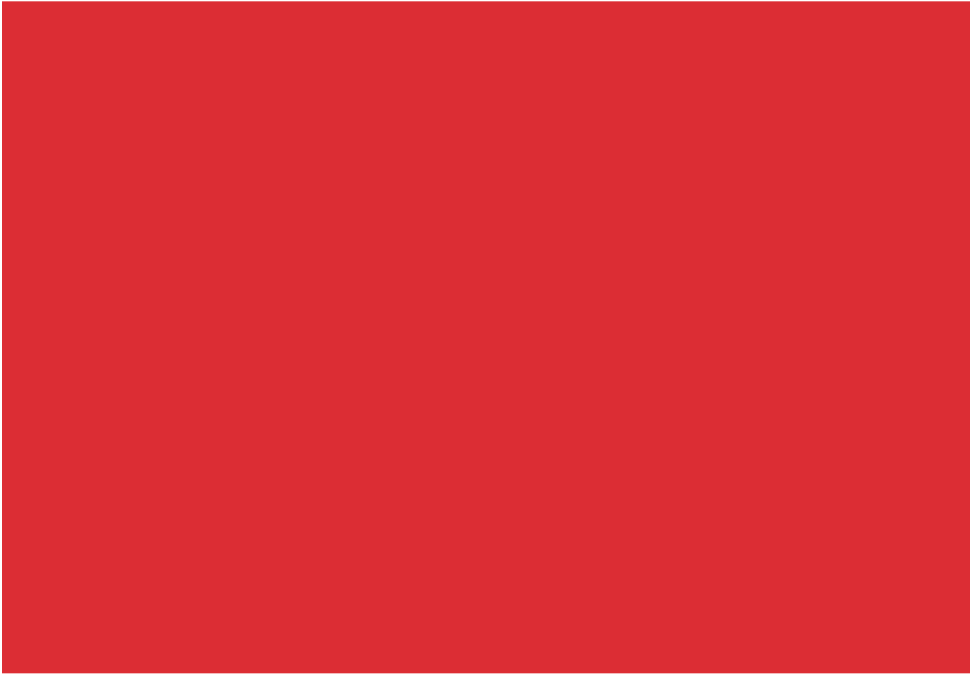
so they fire when we pull the trigger.”

During the scenario, 12-14 enemy troops threatened the helicopters with anti-aircraft missiles. The objective was to fly to Idesuna Island undetected, conduct troop insertions, and eliminate or capture any enemy personnel and equipment.

“The training helps us build combat readiness and flight leadership,” said Kushnir. “Flying is a perishable skill, and we need to train constantly to be proficient. Since we are with the MEU, we are focused on readiness because we can leave at a moment’s notice.”

Crew chiefs need to train on a daily basis, so that they can operate fluently when they are on a mission, said Lance Cpl. Brandon P. Pratt, a CH-46E crew chief with HMM-262 (REIN). They must be able to handle everything inside the helicopter and be conscious of other wingmen.

Simply put, “Our job is to train constantly until we go to combat,” Pratt said.





# VMFA-134 Marines walk the wire in repair shop

Story by Lance Cpl. James B. Hoke

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

From replacing and rerouting bad wires to discovering and fixing problems on aircraft, the Marines of the avionics shop's electronics section with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 134, Marine Aircraft Group 46, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, work at getting their remaining jets operational before the squadron returns to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar from deployment.

"(VMFA-134) deployed to Poland about two weeks ago, leaving only a few of us behind to do the maintenance back here," said Master Sgt. Craig S. Cavins, avionics chief, VMFA-134. "The aircraft (VMFA-134) uses are really old and, being old, are more likely to mess up or break."

"What we have been working on with this particular aircraft is replacing an old cable that runs from the nose of the aircraft to the tail," added the Granite City, Ill., native, as he continues to work. "It looks like a simple job where you could just pull one out and plug the other in."

Although it looks like an easy job, the method is anything but simple.

"We have to take all the panels on the turtle back off and push the wire from one end

of the aircraft to the other," said Cpl. Emmanuel D. Munoz, aviation electrician, VMFA-134. "Each panel in this aircraft has several screws keeping them tight against the aircraft, so it really is a pain when you have to take all of them off."

According to Munoz, the pilot reports a problem with the aircraft and then the avionics Marines locate the problem. In this case, the problem started with the radar systems.

"The radar wasn't keeping a signal because the cable went bad," said the Clovis, N.M., native.

**"Each panel in this aircraft has several screws keeping them tight against the aircraft, so it really is a pain when you have to take all of them off."**

**Cpl. Emmanuel D. Munoz  
Aviation electrician, VMFA-134**

"Anything could have made it go bad. These are old wires, so it could have been a short in the wire from

vibrations in the aircraft or different voltage problems."

However, a tedious task such as replacing one cable can take as long as eight hours to replace.

"With all of the areas that we have to run the cable through and under, it can take anywhere from three to eight hours," said Cavins.

Although it's a time consuming job, the Marines love doing it.

"Sometimes it is a tough and irritating job," concluded Munoz. "It is constant work, but I love it. I've been doing this for a little over a year and have fun doing it."



Corporal Emmanuel D. Munoz, (near), and Lance Cpl. Swani M. Cardenas, both aviation electricians with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 134, Marine Aircraft Group 46, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, loosen the cables underneath the turtle back on an F/A-18D Hornet at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar June 30. *Photo by Lance Cpl. James B. Hoke*



## Thai Military Delegation comes to Miramar

Members of the Thai Military Parliament Delegation present a gift to Col. Philip S. Parkhurst, community plans and liaison officer, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, during the delegation's visit July 18. The group of Thai military advisors is the equivalent to the United States' House Armed Services Committee. *Photo by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III*



## Marines visit Iraqi school

Story by Lance Cpl. Lucian Friel

*2nd Marine Division Combat Correspondent*

AL UBAYDI, Iraq — The 5th Civil Affairs Group Marine wanted to give the local Iraqi children at a school in Old Ubaydi some candy, but they hung back at first.

“I had jelly beans in one cargo pocket and a handful of dimes in the other,” said Lance Cpl. Christopher F. Tustin, a Phila., Pa., native and a civil affairs Marine in direct support of 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, after a school visit.

Many of the girls were frightened when they first encountered the Marines from the CAG and Weapons Company, who had traveled to the local, all-girls school in Old Ubaydi April 27.

“Some of them started to cry and most of them ran away from us screaming,” said the 2000 West Chester University graduate. “I felt bad, but we had a mission to do.”

Through the translators, the children began to realize that the Marines were not there to harm them, but to help them.

“After we explained that we’re there for the kids, (they) started to warm up to us,” Tustin said. “You know, they were typical little girls. They giggled and waved at us and truly enjoyed having us there.”

The Marines’ mission was to assess the condition of the schools and gain an idea of what type of school supplies they needed.

This was the 1994 Cardinal-O’Hare High School graduate’s first time visiting an Iraqi all-girl school.

“I’ve seen how the boys go to school, but we were never allowed to see the girls,” said Tustin. “That’s just how their society is. So this was the first time many of them saw Americans.

“We found out they didn’t have a lot of supplies and the sanitation of the school was less than satisfactory,” said the 28-year-old.

According to Tustin, seeing the conditions they go to school in humbled him.

“The schools here can’t even compare to the schools in the United States. These schools would never pass in the States. I think the average American doesn’t realize the level of poverty these people go through,” he said.

Another Marine, Pfc. Christopher L. Parra, 25, agreed with Tustin on the quality of schools in this area of Iraq.

“Even some of the worst poverty areas in the U.S. don’t compare to the poverty these kids face, and most of these kids will never see anything better, but that’s what we’re here for—to help them build a better life,” said the Long Beach, Calif., native and father of two. “I feel like giving them everything I have, and I want to let them know that we can give them a better life if they allow us to and help us rid this country of terrorists.”

Tustin and Parra both explain how they are forever changed by the experience they had here.

“You realize that you have to sometimes put the ‘warrior’ aside, so to speak, and help the good people of Iraq that have suffered for so many years,” Tustin said. “Today I am changed, because seeing these kids has shown me the softer, innocent side of this place. It’s not all of the violence that you see on television. I’ll never forget this.”



Briefs

Miramar Movies

The Bob Hope Theater is located in Building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies. Admission is \$1. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information, call 577-4143 or log on to [www.mccsmiramar.com](http://www.mccsmiramar.com).

**Friday:**  
6:30 p.m. Madagascar (PG)  
9:00 p.m. Cinderella Man (PG-13)

**Saturday:**  
1:00 p.m. Madagascar (PG)  
6:30 p.m. Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants (PG)  
9:00 p.m. The Longest Yard (PG-13)

**Sunday:**  
1:00 p.m. The Longest Yard (PG-13)  
6:30 p.m. Star Wars 3: Revenge of the Sith (PG-13)

**Wednesday:**  
6:30 p.m. Mr. & Mrs. Smith (PG-13)

**Thursday:**  
2:00 p.m. The Adventures of Sharkboy & Lavagirl (PG)  
6:30 p.m. Cinderella Man (PG-13)

Meet the Dukes of Hazzard

The Bob Hope Theater will host a special USO-Marine Corps Community Services Meet the Stars event July 29 at 8 p.m. featuring a group of Hollywood stars from the film “Dukes of Hazzard.”

Slated to appear are Willie Nelson and Jessica Simpson. The event will be followed by a special screening of the movie. Servicemembers in uniform will have seating privileges. For more information, call 577-6365.

Religious Services

The Chaplain’s Office is located in Building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain’s Office at 577-1333.

**Sunday:**  
9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service  
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist  
**Wednesday:**  
7 p.m. Baptist service  
**Monday-Friday:**  
11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic daily mass  
**Jewish:**  
7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD  
7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

Air Show preferred seating

Preferred seating for the 2005 MCAS Miramar Air Show is now available. Tickets may be purchased at the MCAS Miramar Entertainment, Leisure and Ticket Office or online.

For more ticket information, visit [www.miramarairshow.ticketinfo2005.com](http://www.miramarairshow.ticketinfo2005.com) or call 1-888-4-FLY-SHOW.

Pharmacy pick-up window

Starting Aug. 1, the Miramar Pharmacy pick-up window will serve customers by walk-up only and will no longer support drive-through refills. The window is for picking up -prescription refills.

Phone-in refills can be placed by calling (619) 532-8400.

Automotive Services Exams

Active duty applications for the November 2005 Automotive Services Excellence Examinations must be submitted to the Miramar Education Center, Building 8456, by Aug. 31.

Applicants must pay a \$32 registration fee and may take up to three exams. Additional exams cost extra. Regular exams are \$25, advanced exams are \$50 and re-certification exams are \$50.

Registration forms are available from the Education Center.

Applicants must have either an automotive Military Occupation Specialty or related MOS.

There will be no civilian testing. For more information, call 577-1895.

Impounded Vehicles

The following vehicles have been impounded and need to be claimed by the owners. Towing fees average \$113, storage fees \$28 daily. For more information contact the Provost Marshal’s Office at 577-1461.

Vehicle:	License:	Vehicle:	License:
1994 Saturn Sedan	CA/3HNN476	1980 Pontiac Trans Am	CA/4TGW678
1986 Mazda RX-7	CA/1PXV997	1999 Ford Mustang	CA/6B05453
1996 Honda Civic	CA/4BMR148	1993 Chevy Impala	CA/4MZV175
1990 Geo Storm	WI/DG388T	1998 Toyota Tacoma	CA/5X02132
1980 Chevy Camaro	CA/5EVA702	1986 Oldsmobile	CA/2CXL275
1996 Mitsubishi Eclipse	CA/4VPD893	1993 Buick LeSabre	CA/3EAU645

FLIGHT JACKET CLASSIFIEDS



